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HIGHLIGHTS

U.S. Cattle on Feed Down 7 Percent

Cattle and calves on feed for slaughter market in the United States for feedlots with capacity of 1,000 or more head totaled 11.2 million head on January 1, 2009. The inventory was 7 percent below January 1, 2008 and 6 percent below January 1, 2007. The inventory included 7.07 million steers and steer calves, down 8 percent from the previous year. This group accounted for 63 percent of the total inventory. Heifers and heifer calves accounted for 4.10 million head, down 6 percent from 2008.

Placements in feedlots during December totaled 1.65 million, 3 percent below 2007 and 4 percent below 2006. Net placements were 1.57 million head. During December, placements of cattle and calves weighing less than 600 pounds were 425,000, 600-699 pounds were 490,000, 700-799 pounds were 407,000 and 800 pounds and greater were 325,000.

Marketings of fed cattle during December totaled 1.68 million, 2 percent above 2007 and 4 percent above 2006.

Other disappearance totaled 76,000 during December, 31 percent above 2007 but 14 percent below 2006.

January 1, 2009 Potato Stocks

Montana potato producers held 3.3 million cwt of potatoes in storage on January 1, 2009, down 3 percent from the previous year. This number represents 95 percent of the 2008 potato crop production.

The 13 major potato States held 213 million cwt of potatoes in storage January 1, 2009, down 9 percent from a year ago and 6 percent below January 1, 2007. Potatoes in storage accounted for 58 percent of the 2008 fall storage States' production, down 1 point from January 1, 2008. Klamath Basin stocks totaled 3.30 million cwt on January 1, 2009, down 3 percent from a year ago. Klamath Basin stocks include potatoes stored in California and Klamath County, Oregon. Potato disappearance, at 155 million cwt, was 5 percent below both January 1, 2008 and 2007. Season-to-date shrink and loss, at 14.8 million cwt, was down 10 percent from the same date in 2008 and 8 percent below 2007. Processors in the 9 major States have used 87.3 million cwt of potatoes this season, down 3 percent from the same period last year and down 4 percent from 2 years ago. Dehydrating usage accounted for 14.6 million cwt of the total processing, down 13 percent from last year and 24 percent below the same period in 2007.

Beginning this month, previous month's stocks, shrinkage, and dehydration estimates are open for revisions.

December 2008 Red Meat Production

Montana slaughter plants produced 1.4 million pounds, dressed weight, of red meat during December 2008, down 11 percent from the previous December, but up 6 percent from November 2008. Cattle slaughter totaled 1,800 head, down 200 head from a year ago. The average live weight, at 1,137 pounds, decreased 26 pounds from 2007.

During December there were 1,300 hogs slaughtered, unchanged from a year ago. The average live weight, at 251 pounds, was also unchanged from last year. December sheep slaughter in the state totaled 400 head, unchanged from December 2007. The average live weight increased 8 pounds from last year to 115 pounds.

Commercial red meat production for the United States totaled 4.16 billion pounds in December, up 3 percent from the 4.06 billion pounds produced in December 2007.

Beef production, at 2.08 billion pounds, was 1 percent above the previous year. Cattle slaughter totaled 2.67 million head, up 1 percent from December 2007. The average live weight was up 1 pound from the previous year, at 1,303 pounds.

Veal production totaled 13.3 million pounds, 28 percent above December a year ago. Calf slaughter totaled 94,100 head, up 54 percent from December 2007. The average live weight was down 43 pounds from last year, at 245 pounds.

Pork production totaled 2.05 billion pounds, up 4 percent from the previous year. Hog kill totaled 10.14 million head, up 5 percent from December 2007. The average live weight was down 2 pounds from the previous year, at 270 pounds.

Lamb and mutton production, at 15.4 million pounds, was up slightly from December 2007. Sheep slaughter totaled 230,800 head, 1 percent above last year. The average live weight was 134 pounds, down 1 pound from December a year ago.

January to December 2008 commercial red meat production was 50.2 billion pounds, up 3 percent from 2007. Accumulated beef production was up 1 percent from last year, veal was up 4 percent, pork was up 6 percent from last year, and lamb and mutton production was down 5 percent.

2008 Annual Crop Summary

Crop	Montana							US Production (000) Bu
	Year	Planted (000) Acres	Harvested (000) Acres	Yield Bu / Acre	Production (000) Bu	Season Avg. Price Dollars 1/	Value of Production (000) 1/	
Winter	2006	1,950	1,920	43.0	82,560	$4.49	$370,694	1,294,461
Wheat	2007	2,240	2,190	38.0	83,220	**$6.69	**$556,742	1,499,241
	2008	2,600	2,420	39.0	94,380	--	--	1,867,903
Durum	2006	400	395	17.0	6,715	$4.61	$30,956	53,475
Wheat	2007	480	475	24.0	11,400	**$9.26	**$105,564	72,224
	2008	590	570	19.0	10,830	--	--	84,877
Other	2006	2,950	2,900	22.0	63,800	$4.58	$292,204	460,480
Spring	2007	2,450	2,400	23.0	55,200	**$7.49	$413,448	479,623
Wheat	2008	2,550	2,480	24.0	59,520	--	--	546,744
All	2006	5,300	5,215	29.4	153,075	$4.54	$693,854	1,808,416
Wheat	2007	5,170	5,065	29.6	149,820	**$7.14	**$1,075,754	2,051,088
	2008	5,740	5,470	30.1	164,730	--	--	2,499,524
Barley	2006	770	620	50.0	31,000	$3.00	$93,000	180,165
	2007	900	720	44.0	31,680	**$4.14	$131,155	210,110
	2008	860	740	51.0	37,740	--	--	239,498
Oats	2006	70	*24	46.0	*1,104	$2.22	$2,451	93,522
	2007	75	35	50.0	1,750	**$2.76	$4,830	90,430
	2008	*60	30	51.0	1,530	--	--	88,635
Corn	2006	65	18	146.0	2,628	$3.93	$10,328	10,531,123
for	2007	84	38	140.0	5,320	**$4.75	**$26,173	13,037,875
Grain 2/	2008	78	35	136.0	4,760	--	--	12,101,238
		(000) Acres	(000) Acres	Tons	(000) Tons		(000)	(000) Tons
Corn	2006	--	45	22.0	990	--	--	105,294
for	2007	--	44	22.0	968	--	--	106,229
Silage	2008	--	41	22.0	902	--	--	111,619
Sugar	2006	53.6	48.5	**27.0	1,310	$41.60	$54,496	34,064
Beets	2007	47.5	47.0	24.7	1,161	--	--	31,834
	2008	31.7	30.7	26.8	823	--	--	26,820
Alfalfa	2006	--	1,550	2.10	3,255	$78.00	$253,890	70,548
Hay 3/	2007	--	1,700	2.20	3,740	$79.00	$295,460	69,880
	2008	--	1,600	1.90	3,040	--	--	69,620
Other	2006	--	710	1.50	1,065	$81.00	$86,265	70,235
Hay 3/	2007	--	900	1.50	1,350	$78.00	$105,300	77,021
	2008	--	800	1.30	1,040	--	--	76,052
All Hay	2006	--	2,260	1.91	4,320	$78.00	$340,155	140,783
3/	2007	--	2,600	1.96	5,090	$78.50	$399,565	146,901
	2008	--	2,400	1.70	4,080	--	--	145,672
Sweet	2006	--	**750	3.20	2,400	$1,850.00	$1,071	294,160
Cherries	2007	--	720	**3.39	2,440	$1,630.00	$3,561	310,680
4/, 5/	2008	--	*710	2.20	1,560	$2,730.00	$3,958	
		(000) Acres	(000) Acres	Cwt	(000) Cwt		(000)	(000) Cwt
Fall	2006	10.6	10.5	**335	3,518	$9.00	$31,662	399,176
Potatoes	2007	11.3	11.2	330	**3,696	$10.40	**$38,438	406,800
	2008	10.9	10.5	330	3,465	--	--	376,386
All Dry	2006	19.5	18.6	16.4	305	$20.50	$6,253	24,155
Beans	2007	18.3	16.6	16.7	278	$24.20	$6,728	25,586
	2008	11.2	9.8	19.5	191	--	--	25,558
Pinto	2006	10.7	10.5	22.3	234	--	--	9,523
Beans	2007	8.5	8.4	22.8	192	--	--	11,778
	2008	8.6	7.2	**24.2	174	--	--	10,257
Garbanzo	2006	8.8	8.1	8.8	71	--	--	1,539
Beans	2007	9.8	8.2	10.5	86	--	--	1,515
	2008	2.6	2.6	6.5	17	--	--	1,098
Lentils	2006	142.0	134.0	*6.0	804	$10.80	$8,683	3,244
	2007	87.0	85.0	11.5	978	**$21.80	**$21,320	3,650
	2008	83.0	79.0	7.7	608	--	--	2,411
Dry Peas	2006	210.0	191.0	10.8	2,063	$6.64	$13,698	13,203
	2007	235.0	217.0	17.0	**3,689	**$12.40	**$45,744	16,287
	2008	**245.0	**231.0	10.8	2,495	--	--	12,270
Austrian	2006	**32.0	12.0	9.2	110	*$7.93	$872	259
Winter	2007	20.0	4.0	9.1	36	**$17.20	$410	118
Peas	2008	10.0	3.0	9.6	29	--	--	104

1/ Season average price and value of production for 2008 are not yet available. 2/ Planted for all purposes. 3/ Price of baled hay. 4/ Total production. 5/ Value of utilized production –Not Available *Record Low **Record High

2008 Annual Oilseed Summary

Crop	Year	Montana Planted (000) Acres	Harvested Acres (000)	Yield Bu / Acre	Production (000) Bu	Season Avg. Price Dollars 1/	Value of Production (000) 1/	US Production (000) Bu
Flaxseed	2006	35.0	33.0	9.0	297	$6.13	$1,821	11,019
	2007	21.0	20.0	9.0	180	**$13.10	$2,358	5,896
	2008	9.0	8.0	9.0	72	--	--	5,716
		(000) Acres	(000) Acres	Lbs / Acre	(000) Lbs		(000)	(000) Lbs
Canola	2006	10.0	9.8	1,120	10,976	11.70	*1,284	1,394,312
	2007	8.5	8.1	1,190	*9,639	**$16.20	$1,562	1,430,734
	2008	*7.5	*7.4	1,910	14,134	--	--	1,445,064
Mustard Seed	2006	7.0	6.9	570	3,933	--	--	28,220
	2007	15.0	13.0	510	6,630	--	--	34,670
	2008	27.0	23.4	410	9,594	--	--	41,255
Safflower	2006	39.0	37.0	750	27,750	*$13.50	$3,746	196,955
	2007	39.0	37.5	850	31,875	**$16.50	**$5,259	210,645
	2008	29.0	28.0	600	16,800	--	--	310,433
Sunflower	2006	3.6	3.5	**1,278	4,474	--	--	2,143,613
	2007	2.6	2.5	1,186	2,965	--	--	2,868,870
	2008	*1.5	1.3	*500	*650	--	--	3,422,840

1/ Season average price and value of production for 2008 are not yet available. –Not Available *Record Low **Record High

2008 Sweet Cherry Production, Utilization and Value

Montana sweet cherry growers produced a total of 1,560 tons in 2008, 36 percent below the 2007 production of 2,440 tons, and 35 percent below the 2006 production of 2,400 tons. Of the 1,560 tons produced, 1,450 tons were utilized, 33 percent below the 2,180 tons utilized in 2007, but more than double the 2006 utilized total of 580 tons. The value of production for 2008 was $4.0 million compared with $3.6 million in 2007 and $1.1 million in 2006. The average price per ton received for cherries during 2008 was $2,730 compared with $1,630 in 2007 and $1,850 per ton in 2006. In 2008, there were 710 bearing acres with an average yield of 2.20 tons per acre, compared with 2007 when there were 720 bearing acres and an average yield of 3.39 tons per acre, and 2006 when there were 750 bearing acres with an average yield of 3.20 tons per acre.

Sweet cherry producers in the United States harvested 247,060 tons in 2008, 20 percent below the the 2007 total of 310,680 tons, and 16 percent lower than the 2006 crop of 294,160 tons. Producers utilized 239,720 tons in 2008, 22 percent below than the 306,210 tons utilized in 2007, and 17 percent lower than the 2006 utilized total of 287,520 tons. Value of production for the 2008 crop totaled $570.8 million, which is 2 percent higher than the $557.1 million in 2007, and 23 percent higher than the 2006 total of $465.2 million. The price per ton was $2,380 in 2008 compared with $1,820 in 2007 and $1,620 in 2006. In 2008 there were 82,610 bearing acres with an average yield of 2.99 tons per acre, compared with 81,670 bearing acres and an average yield per acre of 3.80 tons in 2007, and 80,600 bearing acres with an average yield of 3.65 tons per acre in 2006.

December Milk Production up 1.5 Percent

Milk production in the 23 major States during December totaled 14.6 billion pounds, up 1.5 percent from December 2007. November revised production at 14.0 billion pounds, was up 1.3 percent November 2007. The November revision represented a decrease of 11 million pounds or 0.1 percent from last month's preliminary production estimate.

Production per cow in the 23 major States averaged 1,726 pounds for December, 8 pounds above December 2007.

The number of milk cows on farms in the 23 major States was 8.48 million head, 90,000 head more than December 2007, and 7,000 head more than November 2008.

Milk production in the U.S. during the October - December quarter totaled 46.6 billion pounds, up 1.4 percent from the October - December quarter last year. The average number of milk cows in the U.S. during the quarter was 9.28 million head, 85,000 head more than the same period last year.

December Egg Production Down Slightly

U.S. egg production totaled 7.78 billion during December 2008, down slightly from last year. Production included 6.71 billion table eggs, and 1.07 billion hatching eggs, of which 1.00 billion were broiler-type and 67 million were egg-type. The total number of layers during December 2008 averaged 341 million, down 1 percent from last year. December egg production per 100 layers was 2,281 eggs, up 1 percent from December 2007.

All layers in the U.S. on January 1, 2009 totaled 341 million, down 1 percent from last year. The 341 million layers consisted of 285 million layers producing table or market type eggs, 53.6 million layers producing broiler-type hatching eggs, and 2.81 million layers producing egg-type hatching eggs. Rate of lay per day on January 1, 2009, averaged 72.9 eggs per 100 layers, up 1 percent from January 1, 2008.

Egg-type chicks hatched during December 2008 totaled 36.4 million, up 1 percent from December 2007. Eggs in incubators totaled 36.7 million on January 1, 2009, up 2 percent from a year ago.

Domestic placements of egg-type pullet chicks for future hatchery supply flocks by leading breeders totaled 199 thousand during December 2008, down 19 percent from December 2007.

Broiler-type chicks hatched during December 2008 totaled 779 million, down 5 percent from December 2007. Eggs in incubators totaled 630 million on January 1, 2009, down 7 percent from a year earlier.

Leading breeders placed 6.58 million broiler-type pullet chicks for future domestic hatchery supply flocks during December 2008, down 9 percent from December 2007.

Wheat Supply and Demand

Projected U.S. wheat ending stocks for 2008/09 are raised 32 million bushels this month with lower projected domestic use. Feed and residual use is projected 30 million bushels lower as December 1 stocks, reported in the January Grain Stocks, indicate lower-than-expected feed and residual use during September-November. Seed use is reduced 2 million bushels based on lower-than-expected winter wheat planted area as reported in Winter Wheat Seedings. The projected season-average farm price is narrowed 10 cents on both ends of the range to $6.50 to $6.90 per bushel.

Small supply and use changes for wheat in 2007/08 and earlier years are made based on revisions in the Field Crops Final Estimates 2002-2007, released December 31, 2008. A 16-million-bushel reduction in 2007/08 production and an offsetting reduction in feed and residual use are the most significant changes.

Global 2008/09 wheat production is projected at 682.9 million tons, down 1.1 million from last month. Lower production in Argentina and EU-27 more than offset an increase for Turkey. Production is lowered 1.0 million tons for Argentina as extended drought reduced yields. Production is lowered 0.4 million tons for EU-27 reflecting a downward revision in official government statistics by France. Production is raised 0.3 million tons for Turkey as drought impacts were less than expected in some areas and higher quality seed boosted yields in others.

World wheat imports and exports for 2008/09 are both raised this month. Imports are increased 1.0 million tons for the EU-27 as member countries import low-priced, low-quality wheat from Ukraine. Imports are raised for Saudi Arabia based on recently announced tenders and for Turkey based on the pace of shipments to date. Imports are lowered 0.5 million tons for South Korea as increased use of alternative feeds, including distillers grains and cassava, reduce demand for feed quality wheat. Exports are raised 1.0 million tons for Russia as burdensome supplies of wheat make Russia the low-cost competitor in many markets. Exports are also raised for Mexico and Turkey. Partly offsetting is a 1.0-million-ton reduction for Argentina as lower production and restrictive government policies limit exports.

World wheat consumption for 2008/09 is lowered this month. World wheat feeding is lowered 1.3 million tons on reduced feeding for the United States and South Korea. Global ending stocks are increased 1.0 million tons mostly reflecting the increase in U.S. ending stocks. Increases in projected ending stocks for EU-27, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey are mostly offset by reductions for Russia and Mexico.

Wheat: Supply, Disappearance, and Price, United States, 1995-2008

Year Beginning June 1	SUPPLY				DISAPPEARANCE						Ending Stocks May 31	Season Avg. Price
	Beginning Stocks	Production	Imports 1/	Total	Domestic Use: Food	Seed	Feed 2/	Total	Exports 1/	Total Disappearance		
	-- Million Bushels --											$
1995	507	2,183	68	2,757	883	104	153	1,140	1,241	2,381	376	4.55
1996	376	2,277	92	2,746	891	102	308	1,301	1,001	2,302	444	4.30
1997	444	2,481	95	3,020	914	92	251	1,257	1,040	2,298	722	3.38
1998	722	2,547	103	3,373	908	81	397	1,385	1,042	2,427	946	2.65
1999	946	2,299	95	3,339	929	92	279	1,300	1,090	2,390	950	2.48
2000	950	2,232	90	3,272	950	80	304	1,334	1,062	2,396	876	2.62
2001	876	1,957	108	2,941	926	84	190	1,200	964	2,164	777	2.78
2002	777	1,606	81	2,464	919	84	119	1,122	850	1,972	491	3.56
2003	491	2,345	63	2,899	912	80	203	1,194	1,158	2,353	546	3.40
2004	546	2,158	71	2,775	910	78	182	1,169	1,066	2,235	540	3.40
2005	540	2,105	81	2,726	915	78	160	1,152	1,003	2,155	571	3.42
2006	571	1,808	122	2,501	938	82	117	1,137	908	2,045	456	4.26
2007 ...... 3/	456	2,051	113	2,620	947	88	15	1,050	1,264	2,314	306	6.48
2008 ...... 3/	306	2,500	110	2,915	950	80	230	1,260	1,000	2,260	655	6.50-6.90

1/ Imports and exports include flour and other products expressed in wheat equivalent. 2/ Residual, approximates feed use and includes negligible quantities used for distilled spirits. 3/ Preliminary.
SOURCE: World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates, January 12, 2009--ERS. Totals may not add due to independent rounding.

COMING IN THE NEXT REPORTER

Ag Prices Received
Private Grazing Fee Rates
Cattle Inventory
Sheep & Goat Inventory
Wool & Mohair Production

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